

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service offers news accounts and editorial comment on national affairs, labor news, and industrial developments, and contains other information of interest to the trade union movement.

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1598

WILLIAM GREEN, President

WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1941

GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

VOL. 31, NO. 47

FACING THE FACTS

WILLIAM PHILIP PEARL

Johnny Lewis stuck his tongue out at Teacher Roosevelt and got away with it as everyone else in the class is going to get spanked. That's about the size of the current drive to impose anti-strike legislation on labor.

Forgetting the loyal services rendered by 99 per cent of the workers in America, forgetting the sacrifices voluntarily and cheerfully made by most AFL unions in order to further the defense program, forgetting the basic principles of common sense in this session and overworking just to "get even" with Red Boy Lewis.

But will this new legislation hurt Lewis? Not to your typewriter. He's got most of what he wanted right now and is practically assured of the rest. And will this new proposed legislation accomplish the objective of preventing unnecessary strikes? Far from it. Instead, in all likelihood, the more legislative restraints Congress imposes on organized labor, the greater the danger of strikes.

Lewis Stands Indicted

Why, we ask, should Congress cut labor's nose to spite its face? There are two reasons. First, there has always been a small but bitter and vicious minority in Congress which hates labor and represents the interests of big business. Secondly, these labor laws are now counting on the votes of members who were sympathetic to labor in the past but have become thoroughly disgusted with Lewis' latest excesses.

That's why labor laws in the great crisis of the century. That is why labor laws in fighting with Lewis to lead to defend the legislative gains achieved after years of struggle.

Beyond any question, John Lewis stands indicted today in the eyes of every worker in America for the greatest act of treason. Members of the CIO as well as the AFL must regard him as the cause of labor's woes and as a traitor to labor's cause. No other individual has given greater aid and comfort to those who would destroy labor and would lead it into ruin. And in these times of extremity, labor cannot content itself with denouncing its enemies. It must find means of defeating them, and circumventing their nefarious schemes. That is our outstanding problem.

All sorts of wild and irresponsible charges are being hurled in Congress. Every one of them would limit, restrict or destroy the freedoms of American workers. If organized labor is to survive, and if the American people are to keep the heritage of the American Federation of Labor, these anti-labor proposals must be defeated.

A Workable Program

Our friends say to us: "All right. We'll concede that the proposals now pending are no good. But something has got to be done. What sort of legislation has labor got to offer to prevent strikes?"

Our answer to this is: "No legislation at all. What law ever devised by man will strike Lewis? It just can't be done. Many countries have attempted to do so, but it is impossible. Both in Canada, England, Australia, among others, yet these nations still have strikes, just as many as we have in America."

This is a human problem and a tremendously difficult one. Human beings make mistakes. They will never give up their right to redress wrongs, and they will never give up their right to strike. No law can prevent them from doing so. We know that. It was done before in the last war. It has been done even more recently during the defense emergency. The answer is: "No legislation. No legislation is called for. The finest results can be achieved only by a completely voluntary basis. We must not let Lewis lead us into a trap."

Let the leaders of the Roosevelt administration lead themselves to a no-strike policy as the American Federation of Labor already has done. Let them lead the workers to believe that it is their duty to strike and to voluntarily surrender the strike weapon during the period of the emergency they are now in.

Establish a mediation agency similar to the War Labor Board of the last war and let it deal with all disputes which arise. Let it be a mediation agency, instead of a court, when an individual like John Lewis objects.

In our opinion, that will be the trick.

Supreme Court Unanimously Voids California Law Barring Okies

Washington, D. C.—The California Anti-Migrant Law, making it a misdemeanor to "bring or assist in bringing into the State any person who is not a resident of the State," was unanimously held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court today.

Justice Brandeis, writing his first opinion since his appointment, said the law was unconstitutional because it was a denial of the privilege of the Federal Government which gives authority to regulate interstate commerce.

Concurring with the majority opinion on broader grounds Justice Douglas, Black and Murphy maintained that the right to move freely from State to State was a right of national citizenship protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. In addition, Justice Black wrote a separate concurring opinion denying California the right to make the influence of an individual a standard by which to deny him the right to move freely from State to State.

The California law was before the Supreme Court in the case of Fred F. Korematsu, defendant, who received six months sentence for taking his Japanese brother-in-law into the country from San Francisco to Marysville, California, in 1940, where he was given assistance by the Farm Security Administration.

Court of Marysville imposed a six-month suspended sentence on Korematsu and the very same day the Supreme Court ruled in his favor by the 5-4 vote. The Supreme Court's decision is within the police power of the Federal Government. "We think it is not and hold it is not," said Chief Justice Brandeis.

Justice Douglas, speaking last for the majority, said that the law was unconstitutional because it was a denial of the privilege of the Federal Government which gives authority to regulate interstate commerce.

President Orders New Hearings On Wage Demands of Rail Labor

Washington, D. C.—In a move to settle the nationwide railroad strike just to start, President Roosevelt called his Emergency Price-Fixing Board of five men to open new hearings.

In announcing the step at his press conference the President said that some facts had developed since the board filed its original recommendations.

The board completed its first study of the dispute between the railroad and the unions recommending wage increases of 7½ per cent for operating employees and nine cents an hour for nonoperating employees.

The board's second study, however, recommended that the railroad accept these recommendations and that the unions accept the board's action in motion machinery for the strike which would affect 1,500,000 men.

The operating brotherhoods had demanded a wage increase of 30 per cent.

The non-operating employees had demanded an increase of 30 cents an hour.

The President said to resubmit the issue after representatives of rail labor and management had told him that they had been unable, in several days of negotiations, to reach a compromise. After the President's new call to his board representatives of each side expressed the hope that a settlement would result.

The President's board is headed by Wayne L. Morse, dean of law at the University of Oregon. Other members are Thomas Reed Powell, Harvard Law School; Charles E. Bohring, Professor of Finance at the University of Wisconsin; and J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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News Briefs

AFL TECHNICAL ENGINEERS WIN TWO BIG VICTORIES

Washington, D. C.—C. E. Rosemund, president of the International Federation of Technical Engineers, Architects and Draftsmen's Union, AFL affiliate, announced two significant victories for the Federation.

The draftsmen and technical engineers employed at the Bethlehem Steel Plant of the Bethlehem Steel Company, which has the L. J. D. L. Local No. 97 represent them as their bargaining representative at the election held by the National Labor Relations Board.

At East Alton, Ill., where the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America is organizing a plan for the Western Cartridge Company, which is not a government property, the union has won a victory.

Following a meeting of the local's officers, the union has been elected Local No. 23 which has given it the right to represent the workers.

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AFL Against Anti-Strike Legislation, Green and White Tell Roosevelt

Federation's Record In Defense Program Praised By AFL Chief Before House Labor Committee

Washington, D. C.—President William Green personally informed President Roosevelt that the American Federation of Labor stands "resolutely and uncompromisingly opposed to any anti-strike legislation."

Mr. Green, accompanied by Matthew Wolf, went to the White House to tell the President that the five million loyal members of the American Federation of Labor will remain "passionately and uncompromisingly opposed to any anti-strike legislation."

"We maintain that the Federation has cooperated fully with the Government in the defense program," Mr. Green declared when interviewed after the White House conference.

"We have adopted a no-strike policy and we have lived up to it," Mr. Green said. "There is nothing no other labor organization has done. We will submit to Congress the record we have made and let them compare the loss of millions because of local and sporadic labor strikes with the record made in England which is at war."

A controversy exists further point—We have never called out \$5,000 men in a key industry nor have we been responsible for a single national strike. Mr. Green added, plainly referring to the recent cigarette mine strike called by John L. Lewis.

The President of the United States has never appeared to the American Federation of Labor or any of its leaders in vain. We have never refused a single request from the President or the War Relocation Authority.

Mr. Green and Mr. Wolf also took up with the President recommendations of the national defense committee of the AFL for fuller participation of labor in the defense program to make it more effective. They explained the plan for the national defense committee of the AFL for fuller participation of labor in the defense program to make it more effective.

Following the White House conference, Mr. Green went to the House Labor Committee and presented a powerful case against the anti-strike legislation which has been introduced in the House.

He said that the Federation of Labor 4 wish to submit proposals basic in assuring maximum production with the minimum of interruption while there are no strikes.

"Our factories, mills and production facilities must supply the major part of the material for the war effort," Mr. Green said. "If we have a strike, the key to success is to create in all doing the job will be to get it through. To build this morale we must mobilize the will of these men."

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Newspaper Survey Proves Failure Of Coaling-off Law In Free States

Claimer for legislation to curb strikes in defense industries continues in Congress. The proposal that has received the widest measure of support is for providing for so-called cooling-off periods. Under them, unions which voted to go on strike would be required to wait a certain period before actually striking.

To get an idea of how such laws work out in practice, the newspaper, after they were introduced in the House, sent out a survey to its correspondents in the free states.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis—There have been no strikes in Minnesota since the passage of anti-strike legislation than before. This is in line with the Minnesota Labor Relations Act which has created labor unrest. Other factors have entered into the situation here, including the rising cost of living.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee—Wisconsin's 10-day cooling-off law applies only to strikes affecting harvesting and processing of agricultural products. It does not apply to other strikes. The law was passed in 1937, when it was 50-50.

Another fact is that no one here has the strike act. Governor Harold G. Hodes has said that he is not sure the law is being enforced. He said that he is not sure the law is being enforced.

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N. Y. GASOLINE DRIVERS CHARTERED BY TEAMSTERS

New York, N. Y.—Michael J. Callahan, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, announced that the brotherhood had chartered a fleet of 4,000 trucks to be used by a gasoline drivers' union in this city.

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59 STRIKES SETTLED BY MEDIATION BOARD

Albany, N. Y.—Only 1,750 workers were involved in the fifty-nine strikes settled by the New York State Mediation Board last week.

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ARMY WORKERS FURNISH AMBULANCE FOR NEAR EAST

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INSURANCE AGENTS RENEW EQUITABLE LIFE CONTRACT

Washington, D. C.—Officials of the American Insurance Association announced that the association had renewed its contract with the Federal Reserve Bank.

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